

# THE PHYSICS OF TEA

## A COLLECTION OF POEMS

BY DOUG TANOURY



# THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

FUNKY DOG PUBLISHING



DETROIT, MICHIGAN USA



Printed on recycled paper

© Copyright 2007 Doug Tanoury  
All Rights Reserved

Please note that the copyright on all of the work in this book remains the property of the author and poet Doug Tanoury. Any unauthorized use is forbidden. If you wish to use any work published in this collection in any publication please contact [dtanoury@comcast.net](mailto:dtanoury@comcast.net) for permission.

# THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

## Contents

Hello – Goodbye or the Little Death.....	5
Asian Art.....	6
At the Beach.....	7
Prelude to a Tempest.....	8
Too Much Perfect.....	9
Clinton River.....	10
Four Fragrances.....	11
Late September.....	12
Dona Nobis Pacem.....	13
Autumn Quartet.....	14
A Small Beaded Evening Purse.....	15
Illusions in the Mirror.....	16
Motets & Canticles.....	17
Musing.....	18
Melancholy Ode.....	19
Moonlight Arrival.....	20
Emperor's Oysters.....	21
Jarius' Daughter.....	22
Sage with Umbrella.....	23
The Physics of Tea.....	25
I Have Never Stopped.....	26
May 2004.....	27
On Her Sofa.....	28
Schrodinger's Cat.....	29
Lake Muskoday.....	30
Unbound and Set Free.....	31
Any Given Day.....	32
A Day in Concord.....	33
Raindrop Soup.....	35
December Lake.....	36
The Ennui.....	37
Nocturne III.....	38
Breathless.....	39
I Hear Voices.....	40
My Own Personal Paris.....	41
Lake Okonoka.....	42
Nocturne II.....	43

THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

Unexpected Gift ..... 44

Nocturne I..... 45

Heaven’s Gate ..... 46

About Doug Tanoury ..... 47

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Hello – Goodbye or the Little Death

East Indian music was playing  
In the background and I tried to listen  
For a moment but then gave up.  
She was speaking too earnestly:

*"Tell me goodbye now,  
because this is the beginning,  
and we should say it now  
to get it out of the way."*

And I was confused by the odd sequence,  
And a queer disjointedness of a goodbye  
Set in such close proximity to a hello,  
As if out of step with all natural order:

*"She said everything is transient,  
temporary and short-lived, so  
tell me now that you love me  
and you will never forget me."*

And had I not held her closely to my chest,  
As tightly as a lion might hold its prey,  
And was she not also limp in my arms  
Like a gazelle pinned to the ground?

And I thought silently for a moment as each  
Second passing was marked by the beating  
Thump of the ghatam and mingled with  
The high pitched twangs of the sitar

That it is only the lion jaws of death  
About my neck and its great paws  
Upon my chest that can shake  
The memory of this moment.

# THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

## Asian Art

You are a delicate Japanese print  
With subdued colors and soft lines,  
And each nipple that lies pink  
On the pale rice paper of your breasts  
Is the color of a cherry blossom  
On an April morning.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### At the Beach

In the last days of August  
With every plant and blossom  
In full flower,  
I understand the power  
Of a single golden afternoon.  
I remember being with you  
At the beach  
On the day of my awakening,  
And how my feet  
In leather sandals upon the sand  
Made me feel like Jesus  
As I walked toward the water.

I too was transformed.  
And understood how one day  
To his own surprise and amazement  
He was suddenly filled  
With overpowering love,  
And discovered  
He could walk on water,  
Transform water into wine,  
Makes the deaf hear,  
The mute sing,  
The blind see,  
The cripple dance  
And the dead awaken.

I remember that day.  
It is unfading in my memory  
As brilliant as an afternoon in August.  
I understood at that moment  
How all days in my life  
Were mere practice and preparation  
For a single happy day,  
With you,  
At the beach.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Prelude to a Tempest

I walked down on the pier today,  
The one that stretches out far into the lake.  
The wind grew stronger the farther I went.  
The sailboats weathering the squall  
In the shelter of their wells,  
All wobbling and rocking slightly,  
Ropes slapping against their metal masts  
With a rhythm and percussion  
Made from the music of a primitive dance.

The surface so fully textured,  
Wind swept and rolling,  
All of it alive with motion  
In a wild rippling and rising,  
Bursting and breaking,  
That is water raised to a full boil,  
With the whistling swoosh,  
That is this prelude to a tempest,  
I stood at the very edge of the pier,  
And faced the approaching storm.

The water is a mixture  
Of grays and greens  
Blended with a painter's knife  
On an artist's palette,  
And pasted thick in sweeping strokes  
Onto what has become the lake today,  
And alone on the pier,  
Wanting only to see and hear,  
Taste and smell,  
And fully feel the wild sensation  
Of being taken deep within  
A passing storm.



## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Too Much Perfect

Far be it from me to disturb  
The perfect peace of this place  
You have created,  
But you must try and be  
A bit of a bitch for me,  
You must be much less intelligent,  
And act stupid and less caring  
On occasion, because too  
Much perfect is causing me problems.

You must never stand in the  
Morning light on your deck  
In a white robe and towel  
Wrapped turban style around your head,  
For you look to me like some marble sculpture  
And I am touched by moments  
Of such simple beauty.

Please stop gesturing with an open  
Hand against your chest when you  
Tell me how you feel, because your hand  
Flutters and beats so gently,  
It reminds me of an injured bird  
Trying to fly. You must stop it,  
For I find this gesture and expression  
Lovely to the point of pain.

Touch me no more, in casual passing,  
Smile no more at me,  
Never again mention to me the  
Russian classics, don't talk to me of Tolstoy,  
Never say Pushkin to me,  
For I simply cannot live with all  
The problems of  
Too much perfect.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Clinton River

The Clinton River is dull  
Colored in deep greens,  
And the sycamores that line  
The banks still show all the signs of summer.  
Their leaves remain as lush as in July,  
And down a path I  
Have walked many times before,  
The river's soft splashing as currents speed  
Around sharpest bends surprises me, and.  
I'm amazed, hearing it for the first time.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Four Fragrances

A Chinese Menu Poem

Quite distinctive on a summer afternoon  
Is the smell of the lake, pungent and strong,  
And the scent of the water wafting on the air  
Carries with it a certain coolness.

As a boy when digging in the yard  
I recall the odor of the earth  
A musky fragrance that reminds me still  
Of things alive and growing.

There is a smell fire has, a trace of frankincense,  
That makes me warm  
Long before I feel the heat or hear the pop  
And snap of logs ablaze.

The air on a January morning,  
When you first open your door to step out,  
Is biting and strong like straight whiskey  
As you lift it to your lips.

# THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

## Late September

In early autumn  
the sky seems so perfectly  
azure, and the trees  
so lush, they paint the landscape  
in a deep summer greenness.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Dona Nobis Pacem

I see that she wears red  
Like a Cardinal's cloak  
And wide brimmed galeros,  
For her body is a temple,  
Sacred in its symmetry,  
Balanced across each buttress  
Is a certain weightless grace  
That rises from feet  
To calve and thigh  
Up hip and back  
To abdomen  
And breast  
Up shoulder and neck  
To head and hair.  
It is a Holy place  
Where I worship today.

She wears white  
Like sacred vestments  
That cover the altar  
At Solemn High Mass,  
I see in each step, a Sanctus,  
In every gesture, a Benedictus,  
Each movement of tongue  
And lips, in every spoken word,  
A Gloria.  
The most Holy Cannons,  
Hidden within the deep articulation  
Of breasts rising  
In preparation for song,  
And in her most private parts,  
A dark and secret reliquary,  
Where I stop to pray today.

# THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

## Autumn Quartet

### I.

The leaves colorful,  
golden and crimson, and all  
pigments in between,  
as trees prepare to sleep through  
the long nights of November.

### II.

The flowers in the  
garden are growing earthward,  
color fading,  
leaves, stems and blossoms lie  
broken on the frozen ground.

### III.

In autumn I write  
in earth tones of burn umber  
and raw sienna, as  
every hue in the landscape  
seems to lean toward grayness.

### IV.

Summer fades into  
A stark minimalism  
Oaks and maples and willows  
That grow along the river  
Drop their leaves on the waters.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### A Small Beaded Evening Purse

She stops,  
opens a small beaded evening purse  
that catches the light just right,  
and standing quite still for a moment  
I stare transfixed  
at the reflective shimmer as it shakes  
and glistens in her hands.

Head bent,  
she earnestly looks  
for something lost,  
as if probing a dark universe  
of infinite mystery  
hidden within the midnight reliquary  
of a small beaded evening purse.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Illusions in the Mirror

I look critically at your image  
Framed in the bathroom mirror  
As you stand behind me  
Absorbed in some small detail  
Of an everyday task  
That is so mundane  
It is meaningless to me.  
Quite unaware that I am watching,  
Studying your face,  
How much like your mother  
You look at this moment,  
With all your energy and attention  
Focused on the minuteness of  
I don't know what.

I think, perhaps before we die,  
We are punished in the most perverted  
And onerous way  
By taking on the spirit and form  
Of our least favorite parent,  
And I will say to you now,  
On this day of past reflection  
And quiet remembrance,  
That in so much as  
I have become my father,  
In action and inaction,  
In thought and thoughtlessness,  
In word and wordlessness,  
That I, more than anyone,  
Truly regret it  
And am deeply sorry.



# THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

## Motets & Canticles

There was a choir singing  
a sacred song, and I do not know Latin  
yet I can count the Domines  
and construe the meaning.

I am sure it is a Psalm,  
an impassionate plea, that praises God  
and calls down great calamities  
on the heads of the enemy.

I have always been reluctant to pray to God  
to smite my enemies, for fear  
that in the confusion, he may miss them  
and mistakenly smite me.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Musing

Lying awake in  
A hammock, I study the sky,  
The patterns  
Of high altitude clouds  
Wispy and insubstantial,  
In light brush strokes  
Across the upper atmosphere.

There is a cardinal singing  
From somewhere unseen,  
High in the maple  
Or deep in the ash  
And starlings fly from west to east  
In early evening, just as they fly  
From east to west each morning.

In these small details  
Of my day, as I lay weightless,  
Suspended somewhere between  
Earth and sky, I somehow feel  
The absence of you,  
A space unfilled,  
A bird not singing,  
A word unspoken.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Melancholy Ode

I have come to see  
That love has seasons  
All its own,  
Of great growth and warmth  
And deep dormancy and coolness  
Quite apart and independent  
Of what I want or will.

And I think seasons have meaning  
Only in their changing,  
The sweetness of summer  
Awakens on January mornings,  
As I now see us  
Not based on what we are,  
But on what we once were.

So let these lines of melancholy verse  
Mark this changing season,  
The bare trees and gray grasses,  
The iced-over silence  
That falls between us  
When we meet  
And all the words unspoken

For us in this season  
Of restraint and holding back,  
Of dormant longings,  
Long pauses  
And periods of quiet resentment  
Between us that will no doubt grow  
Like springs flowers  
Into abundant regrets  
In some future season.

# THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

## Moonlight Arrival

My grandfather  
Worked nights in a steel mill in Detroit,  
And as a young child, it was always my goal  
To stay up just long enough to see him  
When he came home.  
Most of the time I failed and fell asleep waiting,  
But sometimes I was successful  
And was waiting for him wide eyed and awake  
At the front door as he entered.

It is always his boots that I remember most  
And only incidentally his black metal lunch pail.  
It seems I was always on the floor at his feet  
On which he wore big black work boots  
Their toes gray smudged with soot and ash  
A swirling mixture of light and dark  
That somehow now seems to me to be like  
Moonlight shining across the clouds  
On a November night.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Emperor's Oysters

A Chinese Menu Poem

The shells are small  
And delicate  
Like Chinese tea cups.  
Their mother of pearl insides  
Are carved white marble  
With veins of color  
That hold an amebic form  
Swimming in glistening juices  
That smells like the air  
Off Hunan Harbor.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Jarius' Daughter

It was a bright afternoon,  
The sky clear of clouds.  
We all followed as he led.  
As we neared the house of Jarius  
The wailing and cries grew louder. It's death.  
A little girl sleeps  
Through tumultuous shouting  
Alone in the room,  
A treasure spread across her parent's bed  
Awakens startled to a stranger's touch.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Sage with Umbrella Watches the Collapse of the Modern Age

I remember  
It was a perfect summer day  
The kind that only seems to occur  
In early September,  
With a sky so azure  
It seemed to glow with some  
Inner luminescence  
And the vivid color finish  
They spray on new cars in Detroit,  
The ice blue sports cars and  
Peacock blue sedans.

A day so temperate that  
The air feels perfect against the skin.  
It is more an absence of temperature,  
As if both hot and cold have somehow slipped  
Below the point of perception and the air  
Itself has become imperceptible.

Ah, such a day  
Of blue placid beauty.  
And then the rains began.  
In ways fitting for our age,  
In abstract and surreal images,  
In some post modernistic vision,  
With glass and concrete towers  
Intertwined with airplanes,  
Add to that the obligatory apocalyptic  
Flames and smoke and you have a work that  
Dali would paint, a Warhol or a Max.  
And the rain began.

It rained paper and desks,  
Chairs and tables,  
All the mundane debris  
Of daily life.  
And it rained people,  
Arm flailing,  
Legs kicking,  
It rained fire,

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

It rained rock,  
It rained dust.

And I find myself in a Peter Max  
Oil on canvass, entitled:  
"Sage with Umbrella  
Watches the Collapse  
Of the Modern Age"



# THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

## The Physics of Tea

Sitting in the living room  
Drinking tea with her and  
Talking about special relativity  
And the fact that the most distant  
Galaxies are racing away from us  
At 80 percent of the speed of light and  
As she considers this

Pulling a wayward strand of hair  
From her face, she begins to twirl it,  
Worrying it between her fingers, and  
I am touched by the girlishness  
Of this gesture, as she says very seriously:  
"Gravity is a fear of being alone"  
I laugh

Setting my tea down on the table  
Hearing the percussion click  
Of a china cup meeting the saucer and  
As she smiles the freckles on her cheeks  
Gravitate together in Newtonian fashion  
And I know now that  
What holds everything together  
Is simply deep attraction.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### I Have Never Stopped

At this moment,  
Somewhere in an alternate and parallel universe  
There was no Big Bang  
And I never stopped loving you,  
The television is always on  
With no one watching it,  
And I am asleep, endlessly  
Napping on the sofa.

You are in the kitchen,  
There is the sound of water running  
In the sink and a pot clangs  
Against the faucet  
And in my dream I am still  
Loving you and never  
Fail to touch you as you pass.

There is a world  
An eternity away,  
It's July and all the trees  
Are in full foliage. I am sitting  
On the front porch step  
Watching the Sycamore in the yard  
Across the street catch the sunset  
Colors in its innermost reaches,

In a world where I still love you,  
Where I have never stopped.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

**May 2004**

Spring comes to me now  
Like either a green hiatus  
Or an abrupt scene change  
In the surrealistic landscape of some dream  
And I am neither fully awake  
Nor completely aware  
Of all its meaning and import.

The willows awaken  
In wisps of pale and subtle growth  
That forms around their branches like a mist,  
A nimbus of color,  
That sways in the breeze on May mornings  
In ways that reminds me of the soft movement of air  
In a woman's hair.

I walk through the day,  
A somnambulist's unconscious journey,  
Seeing, but not seeing,  
Hearing, but not hearing,  
Feeling, but not feeling,  
Perceiving, but not perceiving.

And when I talk, it is the one sided  
Soliloquy of a sleeper's dialoged  
Where each word I whisper  
Has the visible substance of the vapor  
Exhaled with each breath  
Onto the frozen air of a January morning.

I dream of spring,  
Of soft breezes and mild mornings  
And of the sycamores  
That awaken ever so slowly  
And will not show a hint of foliage  
Until the first days of June.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### On Her Sofa

I sink into her couch,  
The one that I say has many gravities,  
And G forces that pull me prone  
Among pillows overstuffed to plumpness,  
And in complaint to her I say, this couch  
Kills ambition and demolishes all motivation,  
As I sink and settle into the cushions  
That half cradle but most fully embrace me.

And it is lying there lulled on her sofa,  
That all responsibilities slip from me,  
Like so much pocket change that spills  
And falls between the cracks in the cushions,  
And all my promises and good intentions  
Close their eyes  
For a moment of rest  
And then lapse into soft nothingness.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Schrodinger's Cat

Like Schrodinger's cat  
I find myself in two different states at once.  
You see,  
It's all rather confused  
And uncertain,  
At the same moment  
I love her,  
And yet  
I do not.  
In the hard determinism  
Of Saturday morning breakfast,  
She sips her tea,  
And I spread my jam slowly  
Across a slice of toast,  
Pondering  
My choices  
And reforming my past.  
In the solipsism  
Of my most solitary and selfish thoughts,  
At the point  
Where all possible histories  
And futures meet,  
There is another woman  
With a different smile  
Asking me to pass the cream.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Lake Muskoday

A Belle Isle Poem

On summer nights  
The lake captures the moonlight  
On facets of each wave  
Moving across its surface.  
I am a student of evening at the lake,  
Of water that is cut and polished onyx  
That appears solid in its stillness,  
Gemlike in its playfulness with the light.

The only man made motion  
Is the traffic speeding  
Across MacArthur Bridge,  
And the only light contending with the moon  
That draws my gaze  
Are the downtown buildings beyond,  
That stand close together,  
In a tightly packed cluster,  
Like women whispering.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Unbound and Set Free

In the village of Bethany  
Lazarus lied in a tomb for  
Four days, mourned by  
His two sisters Martha and Mary,  
Who would ask why  
Their brother had to die?  
If only He had been here to intervene,  
Our brother might live still.

Lazarus was bound head to foot,  
As he hopped, unable to walk  
From the darkness of the tomb  
Toward its sunlit entrance,  
And standing in the opening  
Shrouded in white linen  
His head downcast  
To shadow his eyes from the light,  
I often wonder what he felt.

If he were changed somehow  
By death and entombment,  
By being bound so tightly,  
Entangled so fully  
In the draperies of death,  
But I wonder most  
Where he went first  
Upon being set free,  
Which is to me  
The greatest bible mystery.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Any Given Day

And shall I seek solace  
In a poem  
From the plummet and tumult,  
From the blunt force trauma,  
Of any given day,  
And shall I find distraction  
Or some trace of measured order  
In a line's fair expression,  
Or perhaps some hint of symmetry,  
And subtleness in its sounds.

Let me dance for a moment  
With each turn of phrase,  
Graceful and poised,  
Let me waltz with the words,  
To move with exaggerated gesture,  
Spinning, turning, bowing  
To some grand and sweeping melody,  
Until I forget the directness of prosaic conversation,  
The ennui of bullet points  
In some inane meeting,  
On any given day.



## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### A Day in Concord

It was at Walden Pond,  
In autumn or spring,  
I can't seem to recall now,  
But I do remember  
It was a season of transition,  
Yes this I know  
And will never forget.  
For me the waters of the lake  
Were magical and I sat down along the shore  
On a large rock  
Or was it a fallen tree trunk,  
Whichever it was I sat on it  
And took off my shoes,  
Removed my socks and  
Rolled up my pant legs,  
Preparing to step in,  
And I did, with slow and careful steps.  
The water was cold  
And from the knees down  
I was numb.

The water was clear, the bright sunlight  
Made it look all the more pure,  
As I waded out beyond my knees,  
Up to my thighs,  
Just below my waist,  
I felt as if I had experienced  
Some strange baptism,  
That would wash away all my sins,  
Like one who steps into the holy waters  
Of the Ganges or Jordan.  
There was a Baltimore oriole  
Perched on a branch.  
I recall the umber of its wings or belly,  
Framed in the green foliage.  
I remember too you calling my name  
As you stood on the shore,  
And I was convinced at that moment,  
In the quiet along that bank,  
Like some holy revelation, and now I believe  
That no one calls your name

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

Quite like your lover.

There is a quality to the sound,  
Some intimate familiarity  
Of mouth and tongue and lips,  
That makes it sound differently  
From every other person  
That calls your name.  
It is different,  
As the song of a oriole  
Is different from the chirp of a sparrow.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### **Raindrop Soup**

A Chinese Menu Poem

The atmosphere is a gray shroud  
That obscures the silhouetted skyline  
Of downtown buildings  
And masks the waterfront  
Where freighters steam  
Slowly up the river  
With invisible hulls.

# THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

## December Lake

Out beyond the frozen shore,  
The small clumps of ice,  
Floating in the open water  
Is a flock of white swans.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### The Ennui

She asked me quite pointedly:  
"Why are you avoiding me?  
Why won't you talk to me?  
Why don't you write to me?"  
And it seemed I that I could hear an  
Echoing report after each  
Question that seemed to burst  
From her mouth.

I remember, I thought a moment  
Before replying: "You see,  
We have reached a point of perfect equilibrium,  
In our relationship, you and I,  
So that I enjoy not talking with you  
Just exactly as much  
As I enjoy talking with you."

So we parted in this stasis state  
Where wanting and not wanting  
Are in such perfect balance that they  
Cancel each other out  
And I yawn and my eyelids grow heavy  
In a relationship where everything  
I once felt falls asleep.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Nocturne III

I tell her that her breasts taste like peaches,  
Little Sweet Rocks, I have often bought  
In small bushel baskets  
From a farmer's roadside fruit stand  
Along a country highway.  
On July afternoons I stop to sample them,  
Juices dripping down my chin  
And making slurping sounds  
As I suck in their flesh.  
It is their smell that lingers still,  
Of summers past.

I tell her that her skin has the scent  
Of July, hot and fragrant  
With summer at its peak,  
Where I linger lazily and time  
Moves in the slow invisible steps  
Of a childhood adventure,  
On a afternoon that seems without end,  
And the sound of her breath  
Is the summer wind  
That moves only in the topmost  
Branches of the tallest maples.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Breathless

You are some magic muse  
That has escaped from  
What seems the innermost reaches  
Of my own dreams  
To tickle and awaken me  
With the white feather of newness.  
You have danced into my days  
With a voice like song and  
Laughter that is the sound of water  
Bubbling in a fountain,  
And when I listen to you,  
Watch you move, touch your hand,  
I am so filled with wonder  
That I must remind myself  
To breathe.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### I Hear Voices

All day today, a bit of Bach organ work played in my head  
A simple little fugue, playful yet dark,  
Precise and exact,  
Each note measured and deliberate,  
For it is the long afternoons of February  
That brings twilight at 2:00 pm  
And an overcast and mist  
That seems to never lift  
That causes it to play today.

Now is it a counter fugue?  
A double, triple, canon or mirror?  
I can't quite tell,  
Nor can I determine the exact number of voices  
Or if a particular inversion is melodic or contrapuntal,  
And I am a bit confused about the composer:  
Is it Johann Sebastian, Carl Philipp Emanuel or Johann  
Christian  
For all the Bach's seem to blend and blur  
Into some kind of familial fantasy.

And if I were a better listener,  
I could count the voices  
And name the inversions  
But today,  
Of only one thing am I certain:  
It is a fugue,  
Caused to play quite independently  
Within my head  
By these last dark days of winter.



## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### My Own Personal Paris

I have always been drawn  
To the little bits of Paris in this town,  
To the novelty of boulevards with open air cafes  
And eating lunch in the sunlight.

I have always been pulled  
Toward fountains in the park,  
Their sound and spray drifting  
Lazily across afternoons in June.

I have always stood transfixed  
Before Gothic cathedrals covered with ornate stucco,  
Anachronisms rising above the nondescript landscape,  
Silhouetted in the sunrise over the near eastside.

I have always longed  
To stop along the river for one passionate kiss  
Long a lingering, our bodies melting together  
From the heat of a summer night.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Lake Okonoka

A Belle Isle Poem

I stopped and thought of you,  
Quite unexpectedly, and I am sure  
That some association here  
Where the geese float  
In little puddles of open water  
Amid the long sheet of ice  
That covers the lake  
In shades of green, blue  
White and gray, brought you to mind.

It is when I am standing on the shore  
Among the geese that move  
In what seems slow motion,  
No more than 12 frames a second  
Do they seem to advance across  
The road and along the shore  
Down to the edge of the frozen lake.

Is that the way of memory and recall,  
The chain of long associations. . .  
This begets that and that begets  
Something else and something else  
Begets a memory of you and I  
Walking with our hands in our pockets  
Among the water foul that loiter lazily  
And look at us with hungry longing.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Nocturne II

I said our sex  
Smells like the forest,  
And she thinks for a moment  
Then agrees,  
And remembers the twisting  
Of limbs and the tangle  
Of trunks and the scent  
That fills the air,  
It seems,  
Only in the shade  
Beneath the underside of thick foliage,  
Sunlit and translucent,  
Like the backlit panes of stained glass  
In a large church window.  
She nods for she too has smelled  
The fragrant earth  
On the path that runs along the river,  
And heard the sound the bed linens make,  
As we move,  
Are the leaves rustling in a breeze  
On a June afternoon.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Unexpected Gift

Love is like an unexpected gift  
A fridge magnet, a coaster  
Or a small make-up compact  
That will fit easily into a pocket  
Or small evening handbag.  
Not much more than a token,  
A mere trinket,  
All quite seemingly ordinary  
And everyday things,  
That by love's virtue are transformed  
Into some holy relic of romance,  
Something of great worth  
And weighty importance,  
A thing fundamentally changed,  
As the lovers themselves  
Have been transubstantiated  
With new life and purpose  
Into beings with greater depth  
And more profound meaning.  
They have grown bigger with grandeur  
And larger in significance.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Nocturne I

She says our sex  
Smells like the ocean,  
And I think for a moment  
Then agree  
That the undulation of torso,  
Belly, buttocks and breasts  
Are the slow movements  
Of swells far out at sea,  
A gentle rising and falling,  
A meter beating out high and low,  
Hard and soft, air now water,  
A rhythm of winds and waves,  
And I remember as a child  
Holding a conch shell,  
That had the same pink  
Flush as her breast, to my ear,  
But tonight the pattern of her breath  
Makes a sound,  
Both soothing and soft,  
Of breakers on the beach.

## THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

### Heaven's Gate

The Kingdom of God  
Is some gentler universe,  
A more perfect place where all ills are made right,  
Where the blind see,  
The deaf hear,  
The mutes sing,  
The crippled dance and the dead walk,  
Where all things move  
Toward higher order and more profound meaning.

The Kingdom of God  
Is the province of the poor in spirit,  
Where the meek inherit the land,  
And those that mourn find comfort,  
Where the hungry and thirsty for justice,  
Find it.  
It is a place where mercy is measured in kind,  
The clean of heart  
See God,  
And those that suffer for justice's sake  
Are ushered in unencumbered.

The Kingdom of God  
Poetry is the physics that governs all natural laws  
From the interaction of atoms  
To the movement of the stars,  
Where all of nature grows  
Toward rightness,  
Angels converse only in meter and rhyme,  
And saints speak only in similes and metaphor  
And God is an irony so beautiful  
That no one can look at  
The Almighty without crying.

# THE PHYSICS OF TEA BY DOUG TANOURY

## About Doug Tanoury



Doug Tanoury was born and raised in Detroit and attended Wayne State University and The University of Detroit. His work has been published widely both in print and in electronic form.

A number of his poetry collections are available in ebook form at: [The Poetry of Doug Tanoury \(http://home.comcast.net/~dtanoury1/Tanoury.html\)](http://home.comcast.net/~dtanoury1/Tanoury.html)

and [The Poetry of Doug Tanoury \(http://home.comcast.net/~ryoung210/\)](http://home.comcast.net/~ryoung210/)

Doug's poetry has the subject of features in the New York Times Online and The Detroit News. One of his poems also won Honorable Mention in the Detroit Metro Times "Get Lit" special issue of 2006. Much of Doug's online work can be read by typing his last name into any Internet search engine.